

# Sinai Temple

## BULLETIN



*Take Back Your Time: Rediscover Shabbat*

## For Your Consideration

Rabbi Mark Dov Shapiro

What if you don't pray much? What if Torah Study sounds intimidating? Is there anything else at Sinai Temple that might touch you or matter?

I think the month of May just might be what you are looking for. Two alternate paths into Sinai are coming your way.

First, there is Mitzvah Day on Sunday, May 3. Between the hours of 9 a.m. and noon that day we are inviting anyone and everyone at Sinai to volunteer. If you like to bike ride, grab your helmet and come join us for an 18 mile journey. Aside from the fun, we are asking riders to donate toward a fund that will provide summer camp scholarships to needy kids in Springfield. Too active? Come paint three classrooms at a Springfield pre-school. Or plant some bushes at the Temple. Or join the group taking army veterans out to brunch. Or join the group that will play instrumental music at the Jewish Nursing Home.

We've got a mini-bike ride for young families. We're making sandwiches for the homeless. You can even get your car washed by our 6th and 7th graders.

On Sunday, May 3, your Temple can matter to you and to the larger community if you become part of Mitzvah Day.

OR consider the possibility of signing up for the first-ever intergenerational softball game on Sunday, May 17. We have challenged Temple Beth El to a softball game for everyone at the JCC between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

Adult men and women will play an inning or two. Kids of all ages will play against each other in other innings. One "team" will lose, but none of us can lose on a morning that promises to be relaxed, joyful, and good for the Jews!

Register for Mitzvah Day at our website. [www-sinai-temple.org](http://www-sinai-temple.org).

Register yourself and/or your children by contacting the Temple office ([rblanchettegage@sinai-temple.org](mailto:rblanchettegage@sinai-temple.org)) or Bonnie Mikesch ([bpmikesch@comcast.net](mailto:bpmikesch@comcast.net).)

## Saturday Torah Study

Saturday Mornings  
Torah Study  
At 9 a.m.

## Saturday Mornings

Services at 10:30 a.m.  
Mazal Tov to our Bnai Mitzvah  
May 2 - Michael Mueller  
Son of Stephen and Nancy Mueller  
May 9 - Andrew Stone  
Son of Mark and Melanie Stone  
May 16 - Hayden Van Brewer  
Son of Britton Brewer and Judy Van Raalte  
May 30 - Rachel Sherman  
Daughter of Scott and Rebecca Sherman

## Shavuot 5769

Erev Shavuot - Thursday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m.  
Shavuot Day - Friday, May 29 at 10:30 a.m.

## Sustaining Membership

Sustaining Membership Program -  
You're invited to join the Sustaining Membership Program this month just before the new fiscal year arrives in June.

FRIDAY EVENING SERVICES - NOTE THE TIMES - 76888

### FAMILY SERVICE at 7:00 p.m.

May 1

Blue and white Shabbat as we celebrate Israel's Birthday - Yom Ha-atzmaut. Prizes for the Andy Berger Art Contest also awarded.

### KABBALAT SHABBAT at 6:00 p.m.

May 8

Veggies & snacks at 5:30 p.m. Honoring our High School Seniors.

### FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE at 8 p.m.

May 15

Music and much more.

### TWO SHABBAT SERVICES WITH TORAH at 8 p.m.

May 22 & 29

We'll read Torah and "take back" some of the time we need for our souls.

**Take Back Your Time: Rediscover Shabbat**

**Sinai Temple Annual Meeting  
Tuesday May 26, 7:30 p.m.  
At the crossroads: Please join us!**

Never been to an annual meeting at Sinai before? Or, you've been but it's been years. Concerned that no one will remember what you look like. No worries, come anyway!

Please plan on joining us for this year's meeting so you can meet your slate of lay leaders and help them continue the long heritage of Sinai Temple. We have critical decisions to make for the congregation's future. Don't wait to read about it as news in the next Temple Bulletin. Come help make the news! Now more than ever we need your involvement in the future of Sinai.

**Judaica Shop Corner**

We're into spring! Come and see our B'nai Mitzvah tallisim and gifts, engagement and wedding gifts and Mother's Day specials. Passover was lovely. We pleased so many congregants with our traditional and fun Judaica.

Come down and browse thru our end-of-season sales and close-outs.

We're back to our regular hours:

Thursdays 2:00-4:30 p.m.

Sundays 9:00-12:30

and always by appointment for your convenience.

Thais Fischel 786-9517

Bobbi Cossin 565-9970

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published monthly by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 9 for the year 2008-2009.

- Mark Dov Shapiro ..... Rabbi
- Martin Levson..... Cantor
- Sheila Shear ..... Director of Education
- Andy Chaet..... SPFTY Advisor
- Officers**
- David Roberts..... President
- Rina Miller ..... First Vice President
- Roberta Gang ..... Vice President
- Mark Stone ..... Vice President
- Joel Bertuzzi ..... Treasurer
- Laurie Weinberg ..... Financial Secretary
- Jackie Neiman ..... Recording Secretary
- Mike Bader ..... Membership Chair
- Ron Weiss ..... Cemetery Chair
- Scott Sherman ..... Men of Sinai

Visit our website: [www.sinai-temple.org](http://www.sinai-temple.org)

**Notes from Cantor Martin Levson**

A (slightly) belated thank you goes out to the talented and dedicated men and women of the Sinai Temple Adult Volunteer Choir, who performed Charles Davidson's Sephardic Service so beautifully in March! This iteration of the Choir included both long-time choir members and newcomers: Judy Aronson, Marilyn Amster, Tina deMeza,

George Dickstein, Bonnie Gibson, Marc Goldman, Susan Goldman, Jack Henrie, Robin Henrie, Sheri Levson, Sandi Lotterman, Bonnie Mikesh, Miriam Pilver, and Ann Rosenfield. Robyn Newhouse served as our rehearsal accompanist (even though she was not able to be at the service!) and Janice Greenberg accompanied us for an extra Sunday evening rehearsal. My thanks once again to all of you! And if you were not able to be at that service in March (or if you would like to hear this delightful music again), you can check out some video clips of it on our Temple website, thanks to webmaster and videographer Howard Kalodner!

The Adult Volunteer Choir's next "gig" will be the High Holidays. The Choir will begin rehearsing in August, and will sing during the evening services for yontif (which means Choir members CAN sit with their families during the morning services). We would love to have more singers join us, whether you are an experienced choral singer or an enthusiastic newcomer. We make wonderful music in the service of the congregation and in the service of God, and we have a good time doing it! Please consider joining us in August.

Ivdu et Hashem B'simcha! Serve the Holy One with Joy!

-- Cantor Martin Levson

**Mission Statement**

Sinai Temple is a welcoming and inclusive Reform Congregation where our members pursue a continuing journey of Jewish growth. We are guided by the history and traditions of the Jewish people as we encounter the challenges of the modern world. We encourage participation in prayer, life-long Jewish learning, and social justice within a joyful, creative, and compassionate community.

## **Come Join Mitzvah Day, Softball, and Shavuot**

### **Mitzvah Day**

**Sunday, May 3**

**From 9 a.m. to Noon**

One day to make a difference in the community.

A giant day of social justice, social service projects. Adults, kids, families. Everyone and anyone will be able to participate in: a tzedakah bike ride, food collection for Open Pantry, a tzedakah car wash, outreach to our troops at war, spring cleaning for shut-ins, Forest Park Zoo events, Habitat for Humanity plus many other projects.

Register at the Sinai website TODAY. [www.sinai-temple.org](http://www.sinai-temple.org)

*Mitzvah Day is generously underwritten by Mal and Sally Schneider. Thank you!*

### **Softball Sunday is Coming!**

**Sinai has challenged Temple Beth El**

**Sunday, May 17**

**11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

Do you play ball? Have you ever played softball? We need YOU! Sinai will be playing against Temple Beth El on May 17 in the first-ever intergenerational softball game in the Pioneer Valley. We need a team of 9 men, 9 women, plus children of all ages. Different age groups will play different innings. The winner will take home a yet-to-be-determined prize. For more information, please call Bonnie Mikesh at 567-3927.

### **Shavuot 5769: May 28 & 29**

**Erev Shavuot – Thursday, May 28 at 7:30 p.m.**

**A Study Session on Judaism and Jealousy**

On the evening of Shavuot, it is customary to remember our ancestors' receiving the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. This evening will include a brief service leading into a conversation about the commandment, "You shall not covet." We will delve into the meaning of coveting and jealousy in our competitive 2009 world. Cheesecake will follow for dessert.

### **Shavuot Morning – An Experiential Service**

**Friday, May 29 at 10:30 a.m.**

Instead of merely reading about Mount Sinai, we will explore the experience our ancestors had when they received the "constitution" of the Jewish people at Sinai. We will meet in the Oneg Shabbat room unrolling the scroll of Torah in our midst. Yizkor will be part of the service. Lunch will follow.

## Message from Sheila Shear Director of Education

*Shalom Chaverim*

As the school year draws to a close I am thinking about our plans for the upcoming year. We have thought long and hard about how to make our education programs the most beneficial and accessible to our students while maintaining the integrity of the programs. We are very excited to announce that beginning with the 5770 school year Sundays will take on a new and we hope improved format. We will be maintaining all classes in a single session, but making that session slightly shorter and adjusting the content of the program slightly. The Sunday session will run from 9:00a.m. to 11:30a.m. and, will include Talmud Torah in its current format, adding forty minute periods for Hebrew study, taught by Hebrew teachers, and special topics and programming will be introduced and focused during the two and a half hour period. We hope these small changes will reap huge benefits for our students.

While we are planning for next year we still have some exciting and wonderful things going on for this year. We have exciting things planned for Mitzvah Day on May 3rd, the sixth graders have prepared a Drash, in the form of a one act play, for the Kabbalat Service on Friday, May 8th, and our fifth graders, who have been studying drama with Merle Zemansky Coen on Sundays, will be performing their short one act play, on the final Sunday of school, May 17th at 10:00 a.m. right before we take off for the fields at JCC to challenge teams from Temple Beth El. It will be a wonderful day full of fun and excitement.

So as things wind down, it is a very busy month ahead. I look forward to seeing you all during this wonderful and busy month.

P.S. Please remember to get your registration in. The earlier we know your child will be attending, the better we can be prepared. Thank you.

## Message from Andy Chaet SPFTY Advisor

*Shalom,*

Not much rhetoric on my part this month, just some VERY IMPORTANT dates to remember:

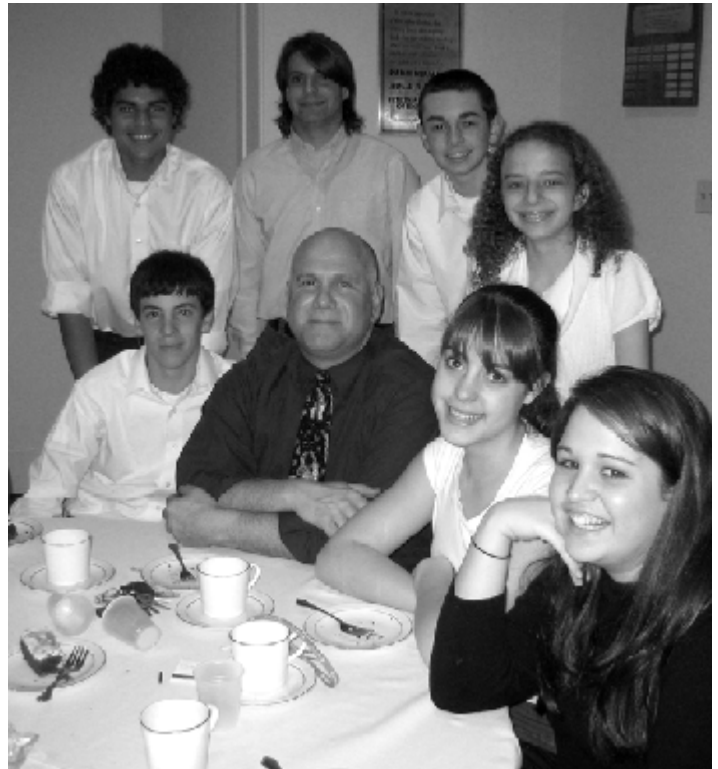
Sunday, May 3 - Mitzvah Day-SPFTY will join in the Tikkun Olam Fun.

Friday, May 8 - Senior Night at the SPFTY Lounge. Join us as we wish the Seniors Mazel Tov and thanks for a great job. Pizza will be served and Brian Nicks the DJ will provide the music.

Sunday, May 17-SPFTY Meeting - We will discuss year ending activities.

May 29th and 30th - Relay for Life at Springfield College.

Please call Mr. Chaet for more information.



Members of SPFTY helped out with the annual Snyder Dinner in March. Here they are smiling after a job well done.

**Monthly Morning Service  
Wednesday, May 6  
at 7:30 a.m.**

Meet on the bimah for a service of 20 minutes. Breakfast follows. Those who need to leave for the rest of the day are free no later than 8:15 a.m.

The next “morning minyan” service will take place on Wednesday, June 3.

**First Thursdays:  
Lunch and Learn  
Thursday, May 7  
12:00 – 1:15 p.m.**

Bring your lunch to the Oneg Shabbat room for a discussion of contemporary Jewish concern with Rabbi Shapiro. The next discussion will take place on June 4.

**We don’t make you breakfast,  
but we can make your morning!  
Torah Study**

Every Saturday morning at 9 a.m. in the Oneg Shabbat Room. (Actually, bagels are available!)

**Take Back Your Time: Rediscover  
Shabbat**

Go to [www.sinai-temple.org](http://www.sinai-temple.org). Find the link Take Back Your Time: Rediscover Shabbat. You’ll see the blessings for Friday night plus other sources. Also an opportunity to share your own responses to the Shabbat initiative.

**If you are in economic meltdown or  
unemployed:  
The Sinai Community Caring Fund.**

Thank you to those congregants who have helped create the Community Caring Fund. for our Temple community. If you are unemployed or on the verge of economic meltdown, this fund is here for you and grocery money. Contact the Rabbi and funds will be made available confidentially. If you would like to make a donation to this fund, please send your check to the Temple office.

**Your Telephone May Ring This Month:  
The Sustaining Membership Program**

If you are among those congregants who pay full dues in your category, your telephone may ring this month. Members of the Sustaining Membership Committee will be calling you to ask that you become a Sustaining Member of Sinai.

**What is a Sustaining Member?**

A Sustaining Member is someone who chooses to offer Sinai an extra amount of fund beyond dues. During the current fiscal year, over 90 Sinai households became Sustaining Members and contributed over \$50,000 to our budget.

By doing this, the Sustaining Members helped reduce the need to raise the fees for Temple members who cannot afford full dues. By assuming a kind of “fair share,” the Sustaining Members also allowed Sinai to continue to offer a full and varied menu of programs.

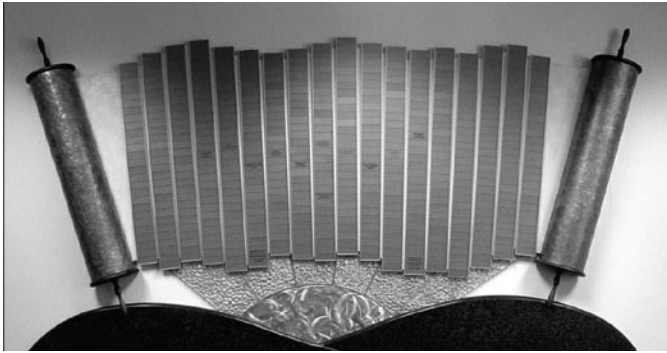
Thank you to those who have become Sustaining Members. Thank you now - in advance - to those of you who may choose to join the program for next year. The levels of involvement are below. Each level assumes a member paying his/her dues and then adding on to those dues the following amounts. (We have increased the number of levels for the 09/10 season so that the jumps are smaller. We hope it will be easier to find a spot for yourself among the multiple levels.)

Leader	\$3,000	Chai Sponsor	\$720
Pillar	\$2,500	Sponsor	\$500
Chai Friend	\$1,800	Chai Supporter	\$360
Friend	\$1,500	Supporter	\$250
Benefactor	\$1,000		

If you have questions or want to join the program, please call me at 567-7320.

Shalom,  
Jeff Cossin,  
Sustaining Member Chair

## Scroll of Life



The Scroll of Life is a work of art in the Oneg Shabbat Room. It was created by Presentations Gallery of New York. The Isaiah quote at the bottom of the Scroll was taken from the Yom Kippur Haftarah as an expression of hope.

The Scroll has space on it so that Sinai members can commemorate either joyous events or memorialize loved ones. Each contribution of a plaque on the Scroll will be used to enrich the life and strength of Sinai. The cost of each plaque is \$200. The inscription may be 3-4 lines with a maximum of 27 spaces per line.

## Break the Fast? It's never too early

Over the last two years we have been privileged to have a Break Fast at the end of Yom Kippur day sponsored by the Goldman and Silver families. This coming year (Fall 2009) the Ritual Committee is looking for another family or two who might want to help put together the Yom Kippur break fast.

Donations for the cost of the break fast are already in place. We are now looking for some congregants who might want to organize the break fast itself.

If you are interested (and hungry too), please call Sherry Souliere at 567-7446 or e-mail [ssouliere@gmail.com](mailto:ssouliere@gmail.com).

## Mazal Tov to:

Judy and Mike Cohen on the birth of their granddaughter, Evelyn May Cohen. Her parents are Dan and Dawn Cohen and her brother is Jacob.

Lauren Katz and Michael Schept on their engagement. Mazel Tov to Lauren's parents, Carole and Michael Katz.

Caroline and Robert Shapiro on the birth of their son, Matthew Benjamin.

Zel Lavin on the birth of her great granddaughter, Sadie Elena. Her parents are Shelley and Jacob Barandes. Her grandparents are Robert Lavin and Janice Boyer.

## TAG SALE RUMMAGE SALE This summer! Bring your stuff now!

Clear out those closets. Clear out the garage. Whatever you've got that might be ready to be recycled belongs at Sinai Temple TODAY.

The big Sale will take place from Sunday, August 9 to Wednesday, August 12.

Bring your "stuff" to the back door of the Temple during regular business hours.

## Prospective New Members for Sinai Temple: You Can Help Build the Congregation

Every year people relocate to the greater Springfield area, or people who have lived in the area consider joining a Temple. Often these people, friends, colleagues, neighbors or relatives ask current members about Sinai Temple. You can help the Temple recruit these interested people by referring them to Mike Bader, Chairman of the Membership Committee. Mike has been helping new members for over thirty years. He has the information they need and can answer their questions. He can be reached weekday mornings at 737-3139 OR nights and weekends at 786-0319.



**Western MA State of Israel Bonds  
pays tribute to**

**Jeff and Rickie Leieter**

**at a**

**Cocktail Buffet**

**with guest speaker Rabbi Stanley Davids**

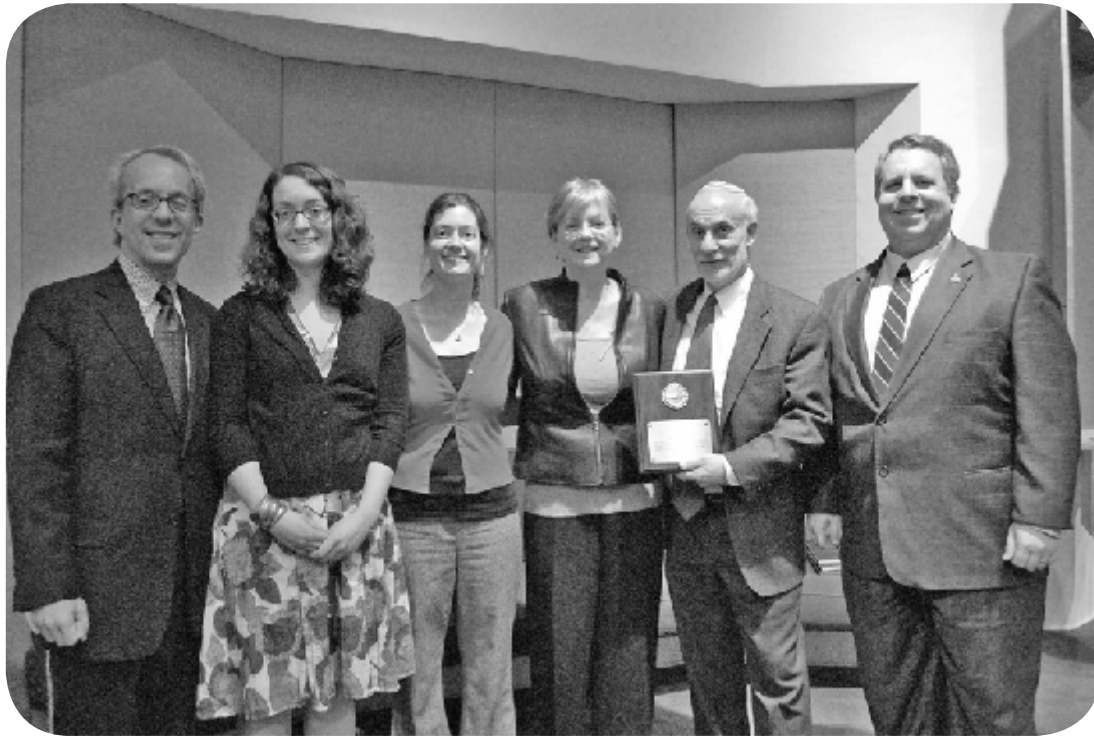
**Wednesday, June 3, 2009 at 6 P.M.**

**Chez Josef in Agawam**

*Invitation to follow*

*For information call the Israel Bonds office at  
800-916-1918*





Mel Chafetz recently received the Rabbi Herman Snyder Award for his leadership in and beyond our Sinai Temple community. The Award is presented annually by Men of Sinai. Pictured left to right are: Rabbi Shapiro, Jesse Chafetz, Elana Chafetz, Beth Chafetz, Mel Chafetz, and Scott Sherman.



Dr. Gary Zola's presentations as Scholar in Residence were remarkable. Zola taught about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and a variety of other American history highlights. He was especially concerned to link American history with our own experience as Jews in America. Members of the Adult Education Committee are pictured from left to right: Betsy Bertuzzi, Joel Bertuzzi, Dr. Gary Zola, Michael Freedman.

## Birkat Ha-chama - Blessing of the Sun April 8, 2009



On April 8, we celebrated together the Blessings of the Sun Service, marking, as tradition has it, the return of the sun to the position it was in when it was set by God in the Heavens for earth's benefit. Rabbi Waskow, in his book *Seasons of our Joy*, explained the origins of this tradition which calls for this celebration every 28 years.

### Excerpted from *Seasons of our Joy* by Rabbi Arthur Waskow:

Today [April 8, 1981], as I complete this book, is perhaps the strangest of all the seasons of our joy for it will not come again for twenty eight years. It is the day of the Blessing of the Sun Birchat Ha Chamah.

On that day, according to the Talmud, the sun returns to where it was in the Heavens on the fourth day of Creation, That was when God set the sun and the moon to "serve as signs for the seasons." (Gen. 1:14). So today it is in a sense the season of the seasons, the cycle of the birth of all our cycles.



Our 2009 celebration had an attendance of 100! We not only "blessed" and gave thanks for the universe as we know it, but we also shared the morning with members of Temple Beth El. Rabbi Shapiro and Cantor Levson led the service with Rabbi Amy Katz from Temple Beth El. The pictures on this page were taken by David Amster.





Members of our newly revived Adult Choir preparing for the Shabbat service in March that featured musical creations by Cantor Charles Davidson. (To hear the Sephardic music from that service, visit our website. [www.sinai-temple.org](http://www.sinai-temple.org))

## **The Memory of the Righteous is a Blessing**

*All of us at Sinai Temple extend condolences as we remember the following.*

Their memories are precious to their relatives, their friends and to each of us who form the community of Sinai Temple.

We remember those who have passed away from March 9, 2009 to April 10, 2009:

Margot Roesberg, mother of Jeff Schweid.

Sidney Williams, brother of Laura Blake.

Sheila Burger, wife of Alan, and mother of Dean and Scott.

Irving Heymont, father of Laurie Weinberg.

## **National Conference for Community and Justice**

**June 17, 2009**

**Chez Josef**

**6:00 p.m.**

## **Annual Human Relations Awards Banquet**

Susan Jaye-Kaplan, Co-Founder, Link to Libraries and Founder GoFit, Inc.

(Susan is also a member of Sinai Temple! Congratulations, Susan.)

For reservations and information, call 860-683-1039

# Sinai Temple

BULLETIN



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*Photo by Joel Solomon*

Purim 5769 - Young people making music as part of our congregational celebration.